

# DE News




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May 11, 2001 - Iowa Department of Education - Ted Stilwill, Director

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## From the Director's desk:

- ***Legislative wrap-up***
- ***Budget guarantee action needed***

Now that the legislature has adjourned for the year – at least from its regular session – it will take the DE several weeks to review the major policy changes and how they will impact our services. Our goal will be to provide the information you need as quickly as possible. But we also must wait to see whether Governor Vilsack will accept or reject the many last-minute bills (namely the teacher quality proposal and our budgets) that were sent to him.

With that in mind, here is a quick wrap-up of the legislative highlights:

### ***Teacher quality funding and policy***

#### ***Status: To the Governor for approval***

- Teacher quality policy and funding both prevailed and are on their way to the Governor for approval.
- The House and Senate agreed to a full \$40 million in teacher quality funding, which is strongly supported by the Governor.
- About \$9 million of the \$40 million will go toward administration and introductory costs for such things as mentoring, induction and national board certification. More than \$31 million will go directly toward salary increases.
- The teacher quality policy reflects in general the agreements made during the past several months of bipartisan discussions. The five key components include mentoring and induction for beginning teachers; a 4-level career path;

meaningful career development; team-based variable pay tied to student achievement; and regular performance evaluations.

- Because there has been much concern and confusion over the provisions and funding connected with this legislation, we will place a high priority on providing information on how districts can access these funds.

### ***Appropriations***

#### ***Status: To the Governor***

It may be helpful to look at our appropriations using several different contexts -- first, the state budget as a whole; second, the education appropriation portion, which includes funding for DE activities, community colleges, and other education areas such as Regents; and third, the standing appropriations, where you'll find most of the K-12 funding, such as technology funding and education excellence.

- Overall, the state's budget is slated to be cut by more than \$300 million from the current level.
- The education appropriation cut is about \$60 million – from \$980 million to \$920 million. That's the appropriation that funds community colleges (cut \$4.9 million), DE operations (cut \$363,000), IPTV (cut \$600,000) and various grants. There were also cuts in other appropriations in this bill such as college tuition grants, loans and work-study.
- Our education portions of the standing appropriations received about a \$40 million cut. Most severely affected were area education agencies, early childhood

intervention programs, school technology funding and education excellence.

It might be tempting to believe the education standings were cut by \$40 million so the \$40 million for teacher salary increases could be funded. This is not the case. They are using completely separate funds at this point and were not used as negotiating points for each other. The truth is, the standings (along with other appropriations) were going to suffer when the state revenue decline became serious. That was a certainty. At the same time, funding for teacher quality remained viable – albeit with many ups and downs along the way.

### ***Other legislation:***

#### ***Budget Guarantee***

##### ***Status: Signed by the Governor for approval***

Schools will be able receive a budget adjustment to ensure their regular program budget is equal to the prior year's.

To receive the additional spending authority for fiscal 02, local school boards must adopt a resolution by June 8 and send it to the Department of Management.

#### ***Allowable Growth***

##### ***Status: Signed by the Governor***

Sets allowable growth at 4% for the 2002-03 school year (fiscal 03).

#### ***Alternative Licensure***

##### ***Status: To the Governor for approval***

Allows for alternative licensure for K-12 administrators and teachers. For administrators, it is limited to superintendents in districts over 5,500 students; they would have to have a masters degree plus 10 years of management experience plus 12 semester hours of instruction plus a one-year internship.

For teachers, this option is limited to grades 9-12 shortage areas or a vocational educational field.

#### ***Compulsory Age***

##### ***Status: Signed by Governor***

Clarifies that a public school student who turns 16 on or after September 15 is considered of compulsory age until the end of the regular school calendar.

#### ***Charter schools***

##### ***Status: Did not pass this year***

Would have established pilot charter schools and pilot charter school districts in Iowa.

#### ***Energy costs***

##### ***Status: Did not pass this year***

Would have allowed school districts to seek SBRC approval to pay for increased utility costs.

#### ***Infrastructure private partnerships***

##### ***Status: Did not pass this year***

Created pilot projects that pair private investors with school districts to share use of school facilities.

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